

PASTORAL LIFE

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A PUBLICATION For PRIESTS

JULY-AUGUST, 1953





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Editorial Statement

PASTORAL LIFE is intended principally as a pastoral aid for priests, and designed to focus attention on the practical problems of their ministry. We cherish the hope of offering matter-of-fact treatments of subjects in the forefront of the pastor-of-souls' mind. We feel this challenging aim is best achievable by welcoming and soliciting original contributions from members of the clergy proximately concerned with such problems. Even though such offerings may occasionally lack in literary consummativeness, they will more than make up for it in vitality and down-to-earth practical realism.

As a matter of general norm, we do not purpose to come to grips with theoretical and abstract phases of dogma, moral or worship. If exceptionally such entries should find their way into these pages, it would be on the assumption that the articles supplement in some definite way the general aims of this bi-monthly.

We confine ourselves to no specific field directly or indirectly concerned with the priest's ministry. We claim no exclusive mission for the issuance of PASTORAL LIFE. In many respects it will bear no eminent distinctive feature. In a certain sense it may even seem repetitious, trespassing stampeded ground of noted authoritative "Reviews"—which PASTORAL LIFE is not. Nevertheless, we endeavor to make it a distinguishable auxiliary in the busy everyday life of the priest.

At the same time, we do not beg your lenience of judgment for ever digressing from our chosen path; nor do we preclude helpful suggestions to bring this periodical more serviceably within the scope of its publication.

We undauntedly, yet cordially, beg your trust in this new venture.

THE EDITOR

Missions of the Society of St. Paul

Some may justly wonder how "missions," properly so called, figure in a modern apostolate such as exercised by the Society of St. Paul. The fact is that we really cannot claim to be a "missionary" Congregation in the usually accepted sense of the word. Nevertheless, we do encounter the almost identical obstacles, privations and set-backs of other Orders in going to foreign mission lands—China, India, Japan, Chile, Colombia, Australia, the Philippines and, soon, South Africa—to conduct our designated work through the medium of modern communications. In a way, the financial burden is vastly more enormous, owing to the indispensable initial costs entailed in the purchase of up-to-date equipment for printing, broadcasting, etc. It was under such conditions that the Society was able to erect the first religious post-war radio station in Tokyo, Japan, as well as expand its press and film activities — news of which was widely circulated throughout the world.

At present a total of about 65 priests and brothers constitute the infant missionary force of our 39-year-old Congregation.

The application and diffusion of contemporary means of apostolate in mission lands is only another phase of the specific assignment of the Society of St. Paul.

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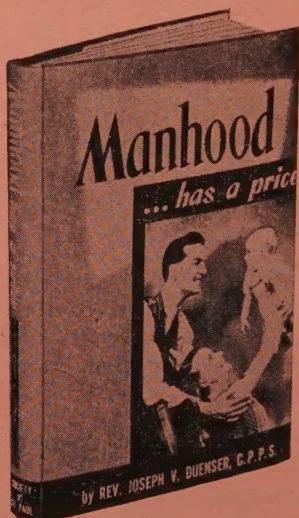
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It's Easy. What Did You Like?

Rev. Daniel A. Lord, S.J.

I DON'T know why it is we priests seem to grow up so fast. You notice, that I do not say we grow old. For priests have, thank God, the good fortune to stay remarkably young far into their silver and even golden years. But we grow up. We stop being our years and become a sort of indeterminate age that isn't young though it isn't old.

It may be the seriousness of the seminary that does that to us. We plunge from high school into the sober study of Philosophy and the

almost solemn subject that is Theology. (Though why Philosophy shouldn't be gay and why Theology isn't enough to inspire us to song, I can't quite figure.)

Nonetheless there, or somewhere along the line, we lose contact with young people. Indeed, something happens to our memories, our own personal recollections. Later on, they will come back with a swoop, and we shall, in our later days (I know I do and the friends of my generation do) relive the wonderful years of our youth. But for a time we just forget. We don't seem to remember what we, as a boy or young man, liked. We forget what we enjoyed doing. We lose the chain of our thought and no longer

In his ever cogent way, *Father Lord* gives us a rule-of-thumb for approaching our youth: "Do unto the kids as you wished priests did unto you when you were young." — He should know!

can recall how we thought and felt when we were eighteen or fifteen or twelve or eight.

Abruptly we are adults. We have dignity and poise and a calm and objective view of life. We see things less as they are than as they ought to be. We decide how things should be done and that is the way, by Gosh and by Golly!, that they are going to be done.

Often in talking with seminarians and young priests I have thrown out this easy hint: "In dealing with young people, you've a very simple standard and guide: What did you like to do and how did you like to be treated when you were that same age?"

Often my answer is a cloudy and remote look of astonishment. "What in the world is the man talking about?" You can see these young fellows there before you puzzling over how they did think and feel when they were adolescents. Somehow between them and the past, really a very near and precious past, has risen a mist, a haze, a blanket of cloud. Is it the heavy weather of their higher studies? Is it simply a substitution of ideals for reality and drama for facts? Is it that they feel when they cut themselves from the world they should forget how in the world they felt and acted?

I don't know. I just know that my recipe which ought to be a simple one is really treated as a complex and difficult answer.

Maybe it is fine that on entering the seminary men put away from them the things of a child. Maybe it is right that they forget how they were only a matter of months before. Perhaps it is a sign of high sanctity that eyes are so fixed on eternal verities that they forget the problems which just yesterday vexed their young souls. They may be so rapt by a vision of Heaven that they have lost the sight of earth.

But whatever the answer, I have the deep conviction that dealing with young people need not be a terrible problem and an overwhelming psychological study. Too much study, perhaps, is devoted to the theories of youth and not enough to the memories of youth. The distance that is called on to deal is really not great in point of time.

Criteria for Youth Guidance

He has not crossed a temporal chasm when he went up to the altar of God. So if the young priest or the older one will try to remember what his personal problems were, he is going to know pretty clearly what are the personal problems of the boys and girls with whom he deals.

What made life difficult for him? It is still making life difficult for adolescent boys.

What seemed to annoy and vex his sisters or the girls his age?

Girls have actually changed very little.

What did he admire in older people and how did he like them to treat him? That goes for the young people today.

What did he enjoy doing? Enjoyment is founded on universal human nature; there may be slight variants due to fashion and style and current crazes. In general likes remain eternal.

How did he want to be talked to? For that matter, what made him mad when his elders talked to him? That is true today as it was way back there, five, ten, twenty years ago.

Why should priests think that modern young people are so different from what they were perhaps less than half a generation ago? The worst possible way to start dealing with young people is to say to yourself or your priest friend, "Well, believe me, the kids are different today from what they were when we were young." If you start with that, you might better ask to take charge of the Social Club in the Old Folks Home. You're going to walk into a crowd of young people, give them that despairful shake of the head that indicates you don't understand them and don't intend to try, and they will give you the regretful stare and mentally — and finally physically — walk right out on you.

The kids have in general more money than we used to have.

They have much more liberty.

They are more confused by the more confused world which we have bequeathed to them.

They are sick and tired of being talked down to as a separate species known as "youth."

They have a great many more temptations along almost every line tossed at their head.

In all else, they are just as we were, especially if the span of years is not too long and strenuous.

They like friendly priests, just as we did; priests who greet them with a smile, call them by name, have time to stand and talk with them, and take an interest in their interests. They can't stand sarcastic priests, or priests who are always too busy, or priests who fly off the handle in sudden irritation, or priests who highhat them.

They like to be kept busy in the company of their own friends and equals. They don't much care what they do, so long as they do it with a congenial crowd and do it together. So no matter what the priest director's interests are, they are likely to fall in with them, if he works along with them and lets them have their chance to do their own stuff with their friends.

How to Win Them

They are naturally interested in sports, music, dancing, hobbies, (of some kind or other), and the other

sex. To keep them from these is to send them straight to the devil who will supply all. To help them exercise these interests under wholesome auspices is the way to win them for goodness and for God.

They don't like to be talked down to. They don't like to be called children, though they don't mind being called kids. If you call them boys and girls, you have to make it sound as if you thought you weren't too remote from them yourself. But no matter how young, they are not children, and they don't want to be called children.

They hate to be bored. (Who doesn't?) So they spot a talk that is badly prepared or shot at them off the cuff. They get right up and take their attention out of a meeting that has no point or purpose, and they give you the blank eye and the unhearing ear when you are shooting the breeze and they are sitting in the draught.

They dislike societies that get together with no idea why they have met. But then, we can't stand vagueness or indefiniteness or time wasting ourselves.

They like to talk themselves. What they say may be the most primitive, simple, unexciting stuff. When they say it it sounds good and

good to their friends who listen to them.

They like a priest to be realistic. They are sickened if he treats them as heels, louts, hardened sinners, perverts, and the lost. They turn away as from total unreality when he assures them they are saints, innocent, sweet, unspoiled by the world around them. Somewhere in between they are struggling with human nature and the fires of adolescence, and their own obstinate natures, and reaching out for God under the impulse of grace. They are by no means lost, for they know that God is good; they are by no means saints, but they wouldn't mind sanctity if somebody explained it to them simply and in words of their own language.

You see it all boils down to this: Remember what you liked, and then give it to the boys and girls today. You can leave the heavy personal and environmental problems, the big economic issues, the learned discussions of behaviorism and abnormal psychology for later on. Right now do unto the kids as you wished priests did unto you when you were young.

And they will love you whole-somely and follow your devotedly . . . right up to the young Christ and the young Mary.

●

The first apostolate, at the present crossroads, is in the realm of Thought. The Church is at the turning point where she can lose all, or win all, according to the spirituality she offers mankind.

The Priest And The World

Archbishop Robert E. Lucey

THE moral, social and religious condition of humanity today offers a heavy challenge to priests everywhere. They are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. The presence of so much corruption in Christian nations would seem to indicate that in some places the salt has not done its work; very general ignorance of religion is a tragic proof that the light has grown dim.

Priests are the standard bearers in the army of Christ; they are the captains of God's people. And when many of the laity march backward, as they have been doing for four centuries, there is something wrong with the captains. The redemptive mission of Christ is in the hands of the priests—in a certain sense, at their mercy. Priests can make

or break the redeeming work of Christ. It is true that bishops are appointed to rule the Church of God, but they are taken from the ranks of priests and the actual care of the faithful is entrusted to priests.

In the important departments of human life—religion, government, industry, literature, education, recreation, health and international relations—Christian principles have not been generally observed, though it was the duty of priests to make them effective. In three or four centuries much could have been done "to search diligently for lay apostles, to select them with prudence and to train and instruct them properly." Zealous and dynamic lay leaders would have sanctified the social order and would

have made redemption much more accessible to the masses of the people.

In recent centuries the Church has canonized some truly great saints, but their virtues were all the brighter for the encircling gloom around them. These "holy men and women lived in an age of apathy and spiritual decline which saw the influence of religion dangerously dissipated. During those centuries there were just too many Christians who were not concerned that the Church was ignored, that governments were anti-clerical, that economic life became "tragically hard, inexorable and cruel," that literature reached a new low of infamy, that education gave godless men to society, that recreation pandered to base desires, that health conditions were unworthy of a civilized community, and that international relations were characterized by injustice and irresponsibility . . .

Two hard facts emerge from all this: first, Christians are respon-

sible for the sort of world which they have built; and, second, to be a passive Christian today is a kind of treason. We cannot withdraw from this evil world; we must stay here and make it better. We are needed in every department of life, from religion to recreation. Always and everywhere we must be in there fighting for the things of God. Sometimes we seem to be a people with a grievance, not a message. To some of us religion is a restriction on conduct, not a way of life and joyous liberty.

To defeat the powers of darkness, to put an end to apathy, to lead the army of Christ to victory we need dynamic priests and apostolic laymen. Since the priest is the soul of Catholic Action, we must first get the priests and train them in the new categories of service so urgently necessary in this confused and wretched world.

(Excerpts from Archbishop Lucey's contribution to a symposium entitled "*Why I Became A Priest*," edited by Rev. George L. Kane. The Newman Press, Westminster, Maryland. Price: \$2.50.)

* * *

ALL THINGS FOR CHRIST

St. Paul sketches for us the judgment of the world on the priest and his ministry. We are, he says, the last of men (*novissimos*), and, as it were, marked for death like the gladiators, slaves and criminals who were condemned to die in the circus. He thus stresses the sufferings and humiliations of Christ's ministers, and ends by saying that the very name of apostle is regarded as a most object title, designating the refuse of this world (Cf. I Cor. 4:9-13).

Parish Visiting - A Pastoral Duty

Bishop John C. Heenan, D.D.

MANY priests will agree that the most unattractive and therefore the most easily neglected of all pastoral work is the visitation of the parish. Its neglect is made the more easy by reason of the fact that it need not be done at set times. Whether or not we feel inclined to give Benediction at eight o'clock some evening, if it has been announced we must be there. Taking Holy Communion to the sick, conducting funerals, in-

structing converts, teaching in the schools, are all arranged for definite times. Our indolence or distaste will not prevent the discharge of our duties. These appointments will be kept because our arrival is expected.

Not so with parish visiting. This dull routine must be carried out between other duties. If we do not call upon the practicing Catholics they readily assume that we are busily engaged with souls needing us more. If we do not call on the lapsed they are usually delighted to be left in peace. Public opinion, in other words, is not a powerful inducement to encourage us in our duty. Only those who have spent long hours and months going from door to door can appreciate the monotony of the task

Bishop Heenan as a priest was known as "Britain's Radio Priest" because of his frequent B.B.C. broadcasts. Before becoming Bishop of Leeds he was National Director of the Legion of Mary in England and superior of the Catholic Missionary Society. He has traveled extensively in Europe (being probably the only English priest to visit Russia under Communist rule), and has twice made lecture tours in the United States.

and the apostolic zeal required for its regular performance.

"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." If we are to be true priests, modelled upon Our Divine Lord, we have to convince ourselves that visiting is worth while. Just because the task is laborious we can easily find excuses for its omission. Some priests will say frankly that it is a waste of time. Just as some will tell you that there are no longer any poor in the country. But nobody who has been assiduous in pastoral visitation would agree that it is a waste of a priest's time. Mornings there will be when no apparent fruit is gathered. On other days house after house will be empty. The men are at work, the women out shopping, the children at school. The priest will have tramped the streets for two hours to no purpose. This may leave us with a sense of frustration. It should not lead us to talk nonsense. It is arrant nonsense for the shepherd of the flock to say that he wastes his time by visiting his people.

The Fallen Away

Consider, in the first place, the visitation of lapsed and careless Catholics. "These people are no good," a priest may tell you. "They have no religion. They have no use for the Church. If they want us they know where to find us." That is not the way Our Lord spoke.

He spoke in a directly opposite sense. "Go ye rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. . ." (Matt. x. 6.) "I was not sent but to the sheep that are lost of the house of Israel. . ." (Matt. xv. 24.) "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke xix. 10.) "There shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance, more than upon ninety-nine just who need not penance." (Luke xv. 7.) "I am not come to call the just, but sinners." (Matt. ix. 13.) That is the outlook of our Great High Priest. Reiterating His directions St. Paul reminded his disciple Timothy to lay the lesson to heart. "A faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance: that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." (1 Tim. i. 15.)

We cannot with an easy conscience absolve ourselves from the duty of keeping in touch with lapsed Catholics. It is true that we are frequently unwelcome visitors. We may be treated with rudeness. We may be refused entry into a house. But our very presence is a reminder to those who are neglecting God. Although there are homes in every parish where the priest may call repeatedly without receiving a promise of a return to the Faith he should, nevertheless, persevere. His visits may seem to lack results. But the day may come when the angel of sorrow will visit this home and because we

have persevered they will turn to us for consolation. If we have faith in the power of God's grace it is impossible to describe even the most abandoned of our flock as hopeless. There is no one abandoned by God. In His mercy He may allow us to snatch them from damnation in the very jaws of death.

But if we do not keep in touch with them it is unlikely that we shall be called in at the end. Even if we are called in we can do much less with them if our approach is that of a stranger. If for no other reason than the hope that these lapsed Catholics may accept our ministrations in their final sickness we should keep a close watch upon our words when we visit them. Even in face of arrogance and rudeness we should be "slow to speak, and slow to anger". (James i. 19.) We may find them insufferable. But it may be that their very rudeness is a sign that faith is not yet dead. They attack us as a defensive measure. Their conscience is stirring. They may not realize it but they try to make us angry in order to have a grievance against the Church. We often discover that the reason for lapsing from the Faith was the harsh words alleged to have been used by one of our predecessors in the parish. A surly man will excuse his lapse because his mother is reputed to have been insulted by a parish priest long since dead. It is pro-

bably quite untrue. The so-called insult may have been no more than a remonstrance with a woman who was neglecting her religious duties. But the experience is universal. Angry words from the priest never lead souls back to God. "For the anger of man worketh not the justice of God." (James i. 20.)

Sympathetic Understanding

Often our anger is quite unjustified. Our lapsed Catholics may be excused largely by their background. The repulsive young man, talking to you with a cigarette in his mouth and hands in his pocket, who assures you that he has no use for religion may make your hand itch to strike him. But look past this young man at his father. There is the responsible person. The father may have been carefully brought up in the practice of the Catholic Faith. For him there may be little excuse. But what chance did he give his children? It is true that they may have attended a Catholic school. But they were given no example at home. The young man before you whose conduct is so annoying may have little moral responsibility for his present attitude. The French have a saying that to understand all is to pardon all. Before we use intemperate language we should be sure that our scorn is merited. It is much more likely that the suave young man receiving us

politely, who has enjoyed the advantage of a good home and an education in a Catholic school would profit more from a scolding. He may have abandoned his religion for material profit or because his passion for a woman led him to contract a marriage outside the Church. Men of this type may not so easily arouse our anger. But they deserve it far more than the ignorant and illbred whom we chastise with our words.

Gentleness is always more profitable than harshness. There is, of course, such a thing as righteous anger. But we should not too easily presume that we are capable of it. To be completely free from blame a man must be angry only because the justice of God has been outraged. If we are frank with ourselves we have to admit that our anger is more likely to have less lofty motives. Time after time we see how sympathy and exhortation are more powerful than re-creminations. If we try to put ourselves in the place of those who have grown indifferent or hostile to the Church we are better placed to reason with them. It is quite possible that they have legitimate grievances. To see their point of view is often to lead them to see our own. And our point of view is God's.

Not all who act in the name of the Church are saints. The lapsed Catholics may be speaking the truth when they tell us that they

were beaten at school on a Monday morning because they had missed Mass on the Sunday. It is not unknown for teachers and even priests to hold up a poor child to ridicule for neglect of religious duties. Yet some children would require almost heroic virtue to practice their religion. It is not hard for the child of keen Catholic parents to be regular in religious duties. Children are usually what their parents make them. But we should never be angry with the unfortunate children from bad homes. The well-known principle of St. Francis of Sales should be the guide of every pastor of souls. A spoonful of honey is a much wiser investment than a barrel of vinegar.

Tact - Prudence - Technique

When we enter the homes of the poor we should be meticulous in observing the rules of good manners. Even though the furniture may be shabby, poor people are just as conscious as the rich that their home is their castle. We may go into their living-room to find the father of the family in his shirt sleeves and wearing a cap. The children may be sprawling all over the floor. We may find homes which are uncared-for and filthy. Nevertheless we should enter those homes modestly. Because of the squalor and confusion they find, priests sometimes omit elementary

courtesies. It is not unheard-of for a priest to enter a house without removing his hat. It is often said that the people like the priest to be a gentleman. This is untrue if by gentleman is meant a man of fashion. It is true if by a gentleman we mean a man who behaves with consideration for others irrespective of their class or condition.

One of the great difficulties of pastoral visitation is to gain the information we require without causing embarrassment. In a small or crowded home it is not always easy to talk to individuals alone. This is especially true when the people we are most anxious to reach are least anxious to give us the opportunity. It is usually unwise to attempt to correct parents before their children. It is sometimes disastrous to reprimand an erring husband in the presence of his wife. The virtue of prudence is abundantly needed. There is no safe or general rule. "Talk to him, Father," a woman will say, indicating her husband or grown-up son. To attack him in front of others is fatal. He will be resentful. In reply to our onslaught he may be impertinent or seek refuge in a silence. In either case we shall do no good. If it is at all possible we should ask him to go into another room—any room, even a bedroom, will do. Failing that we should try to persuade him to come to the front door when we are leav-

ing. A few earnest words are more likely to lead to reform than the upbraiding we might have been tempted to give in the hearing of others.

The technique of pastoral visitation can be learned only by experience. But one or two fairly obvious suggestions are worth making. Systematic visitation will require a certain economy of time. If we spend too long in one house it will be impossible for us to cover the whole district. It is good to realize that the homes in which we are tempted to stay longest are probably those which need us least. It is more pleasant to remain chatting to an excellent Catholic family than to stay in an atmosphere of indifference or resentment. A pastoral visitation to a good Catholic family need not detain us long. They are happy that we made a point of calling on them. All that is needed from us is a word of congratulation and encouragement to continue in their Catholic practice.

The faithful know the chief object of our purely pastoral visits. That we do not need to stay long is in itself a compliment to them. But our visits should be priestly visits. We shall probably discuss current news with the father and perhaps sporting events with the children. But we should never leave the house without saying something which only a priest would say. There seems to be no

reason why on a pastoral visit we should not invite the family to kneel down to recite a little prayer with us. It will cause nobody any embarrassment. We might give the family our blessing. It is odd that the priest's blessing should be given so rarely. We give it to the sick. Nuns usually request it on our visits to convents. The good Catholic laity would appreciate a blessing no less than religious. . .

Developing a System

How is it possible in a large parish to visit the whole flock at regular intervals? The answer is that we must have a system. If we pick out houses at random it is probable that we shall more often call on those we need than on those who need us. If we do not carry out our visitation house by house and street by street it is almost certain that many families will always be passed by. It is a common complaint of Catholics that they have not seen a priest in their house for months or even for years. It may be that they have always been out when the priest has called. It may be that they are not speaking the truth. But it also may be that the priest does not visit according to plan. Haphazard visiting is bound to fail.

One plan which can be successful is to divide the parish into small sections. Suppose, for the sake of the example, that there

are two priests in the parish. If the parish is divided into eight sections and two weeks are allotted for the visitation of each section, it will mean that the whole parish will be covered every two months. This is an ideal which will not be realized in practice. Allowance must be made for sickness and for holidays. At other times, like Holy Week, the priest's other activities will make routine visitation impossible. So in practice parishioners will receive a visit about once a quarter.

The details of a system of this sort will naturally vary according to the size of the parish. In an area where only two priests are required it is advisable for them to do each district alternately. In this way both priests will know and be known to all the parish. Presumably in city parishes where there is a large clergy house each priest will have to keep to his own district. It is not sufficient, however, for visiting to be systematic only on paper. It is advisable for the priests to meet at the end of each week for half an hour specifically to exchange the results of their visits. This has the double advantage of keeping each priest informed of changes of address and other useful information about parishioners and also of stimulating both priests to keep abreast of their programme. If we have to give a report of our work to a fellow-priest whether he is our

parish priest or assistant we are less likely to neglect our work.

Although it is true that our visits to some houses may not result in the return of a single member of the family to the Faith, we should be slow to infer from this dismal fact that visiting is a waste of time. Although no amount of visiting will bring certain people back to their duties, it is no less a fact that many more would lapse from the Faith were it not for the

encouragement of our regular calls. It is an old saying that a house-going parson makes a church-going people. This may be an exaggeration. But it is no exaggeration to say that church-going people are kept loyal by the priest who takes the trouble to know them in their own homes.

(Reprinted from: *"The People's Priest,"* by John C. Heenan. Sheed and Ward, New York City. \$2.75.)

THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

There is something very fitting, is there not, in that her month follows so closely on the grand solemnity of Easter. The whole Christian world thrills to the Alleluias sung to the Risen Savior. The heart of every Christian, high or low, king or subject, man of state or tiller of the soil or worker in the mines, expands with confident hope: a hope that sweetens the bitter portion of earthly living, a hope that defies the powers of evil in their struggle for human souls and challenges death itself, whose terrors fade away in the light of the glorious resurrection of Christ. For He has but gone before, opening the way for those who belong to Him and will follow after Him, members of the Body of which He is the Head.

But mark the words of the illustrious African Doctor of the Church, St. Augustine. "The Lord has risen," he says, "in the nature He took from you. He could not rise, had He not been dead; nor could He have died but for his having a body of flesh." Now from whom did He receive that body of flesh? "Oh, Queen of heaven, rejoice," the Church answers in her thrice-daily chant, "Oh, Queen of heaven, rejoice, because He, whom thou didst carry in thy womb, He has risen as He said." Yes, dearly beloved, in the loving providence of God, it was Mary's "be it done unto me according to thy word" that made possible the passion and death and resurrection of the divine Redeemer of the world. That is why one dare not separate the Mother from the Son.

—Pope Pius XII

HOW MANY PRIESTS ARE THERE IN THE WORLD?

A recent book by the Rev. Hermann Fisher, S.V.D., contains the following interesting statistics on the distribution of the clergy throughout the world.

In France there are 48,151 priests for 35 million inhabitants, or one for every 727; Spain has one priest for every 945 inhabitants; Italy, one for every 804; Portugal, one for every 2,000; Belgium, one for every 569; Holland, one for every 694; Austria, one for every 1,057; Ireland, one for every 607; England, one for every 398 Catholics and 6,656 non-Catholics; Germany, one for every 945 Catholics and 1,184 non-Catholics. The Central American republics average one priest for every 8,978 Catholics. Brazil has one priest for every 2,711; Mexico, one for every 4,929; Canada, one for every 479 Catholics and 701 non-Catholics; the United States, one for every 622 Catholics and 2,792 non-Catholics.

The following statistics are for missionary lands: West Africa, one priest for every 2,231 Catholics and 59,438 non-Catholics; Central Africa, one for every 2,892 Catholics and 12,702 non-Catholics; South Africa, one for every 804 Catholics and 15,289 non-Catholics. The islands of Africa have one priest for every 1,727 Catholics and 25,840 non-Catholics. Finally, Oceania has one priest for every 839 Catholics and 23,980 non-Catholics.

The Priest And Catholic Literature

Rev. Edward F. Garesche', S.J.

GOOD reading is undisputably a powerful means for helping our Catholic people to become better Catholics. Through good Catholic reading they learn more of their Holy Faith, grow in appreciation of its beauty, become informed as to the answers to current difficulties, learn of the rich treasury of the Church's history and literature. If we can interest our people in reading good Catholic books instead of the trash of the "best sellers" and the slick magazines, we can enrich their minds and their hearts and make their lives happier.

Father Garesche' favors us with another worthy contribution on the priest as an apostle of the Catholic Press — suggesting easily applicable techniques for deriving the most from this ready medium of aiding souls.

The zealous and intelligent priest must necessarily therefore wish to promote good Catholic reading. He has the positive motive of wanting to inform and inspire his people and the negative one that through good reading they can be saved from the bad books and periodicals which insidiously harm the minds and hearts of millions. There is an increasing movement among priests to encourage or establish book racks where interesting booklets and pamphlets are on sale, usually in the vestibule of the church.

Many of these booklets are printed, and the variety of the supply points to the diversity of the demand. In many parishes, also, Catholic papers and magazines are on sale. In exceptional

cases one finds even books, particularly in paper covers, mingled with the booklets. Some parishes have book discussion clubs or introduce such discussions in the meetings of the parish societies. All these efforts are to the good. But when we compare the possibilities of the purchasing and reading of Catholic books by our people here in the United States with what is actually done it becomes clear how much remains to be undertaken and accomplished.

There must be about five million Catholic homes in the United States, at a moderate estimate. There are from 25 to 35 million Catholics among us and 5 million homes would only be one home for every five to seven Catholics. Many of these homes are comfortable and prosperous. Almost all of them are able to do something in the way of buying an occasional Catholic book.

Some Revealing Statistics

What is the total output of Catholic publishers in the United States? It would be difficult to say with exactness, but a fair estimate is that about the average edition of Catholic books is 2 or 3 thousand and not much more than 100 volumes appear every year. Thus it is questionable whether more than about a quarter of a million Catholic books are published every year. Many of

these go into rectories and convents, into libraries and institutions. If 200,000 books are actually bought and taken home by our Catholic people, this is a generous calculation. This is only one new book for every twenty five homes.

Again, those homes in which the parents or the children do actually buy Catholic books, usually purchase more than one a year. Hence it is to be questioned whether there are 50,000 Catholic families in the United States, in which the buying of Catholic books is habitual and systematic. Indeed, the Catholic book sellers, disillusioned by experience, would probably question whether there are even 25,000 Catholic homes where Catholic books are brought regularly as part of the family expenditure.

But what is the Catholic part in buying the numerous editions of sexy magazines, sexy best sellers, of the comics and detective stories? Sad to say it is probable that they are just as good patrons of all the secular literature as are the non-Catholic families. The obligation of fathers and mothers to keep bad books from their children, or their personal responsibility in encouraging shady literature by purchasing it for themselves, seems not to enter into the consciousness of many Catholic parents.

Millions of dollars of the income of our Catholic families undoubtedly go to the purchase of worthless literature, or worse, every year.

If there were any reliable statistics as to what Catholics spend yearly on good Catholic literature and what they invest in cheap or harmful reading, they would probably shock us greatly. Is it not time that the conscientious priest, realizing the influence of reading, especially on the young, should take active measures to encourage Catholic parents to stop bringing tainted literature into their homes, and should see to it that interesting, worthwhile and thoroughly Catholic books be read habitually, and that all may have a fear of that mental and moral contamination which comes from bad books?

Not an Impossible Task

To some priests, perhaps, the promotion of Catholic reading seems almost an impossible task. But have they tried adequately to persuade their people to buy a proportionate amount of Catholic literature? Among the topics chosen for sermons, how often does this matter of good reading find a place? The discipline of the Church in regard to books which one may or may not read, how often is it explained clearly to Catholic congregations? How often are the people instructed in the need of providing for themselves and their families mental nourishment which will bear some proportion, in amount, in purity and nutritive value, to the food which

is served for their bodies three times a day?

It will be well, surely, if the priest remembers from time to time, in the course of his sermons and instructions, to explain the responsibility of the person who deliberately buy and reads immoral literature, to tell in simple terms about the psychology of temptation and how bad books, read simply for amusement, return through the memory to plague and distress the reader. He may speak of the current of thought, which flows forever through the human mind, bearing with it the memory of things read and heard, perhaps many years ago. By casting into the stream holy and worthwhile thoughts, found in good Catholic books, any individual can make sure that in afterdays he or she will remember lovely and holy things. The children in our schools ought also to be indoctrinated with a love of good reading and a repugnance for what is dubious or downright evil.

Some pastors have found that by bringing a book into the pulpit and reading interesting excerpts from it, and then announcing that it is on sale at the church door, they can promote the purchase of many copies. Catholic booksellers will provide on approval sufficient copies and those not sold may be returned.

One reason why more Catholic books are not bought is that they

are hard to get. The average Catholic picks up reading matter from the drug store or the news stand. By helping them to buy Catholic books easily, going to and coming from church, a great deal of inertia can be overcome.

Interesting Experiences

We remember some interesting experience told by different priests about their success in encouraging good reading, through plans they made. Thus one priest encouraged the children of his school to begin to form personal libraries. He explained that to have a good book at one's elbow is a great promoter of good reading, and that the reason so many fail to read good books is the trouble they would have in borrowing or buying them. But if a girl or boy begins to accumulate the right sort of books at school, he or she will be able to increase the library as years go on and, as a mother or father, will have a store of good reading for the whole family. Those who enter religious communities will find that their personal library will be most welcome to add to the library of the community. Merely to choose and buy and pay for, with one's own money, the right kind of Catholic literature is a highly educational practice and a great former of character.

Priests can often encourage the introduction and study of Catholic

books into courses of English literature. They can give talks and conduct study clubs with a view of interesting Catholic people in good reading. All these methods will bring a great deal of personal satisfaction as well as much good to the people.

Church door libraries are rare in this country, but they have succeeded abroad and there is no reason why priests should not introduce them. The plan is extremely simple. Put up substantial shelves in the vestibule of the church and stock them with cheap editions of Catholic books. Into each book slip a card, giving the name of the book, with places for dates of taking it out and returning it. Then put a sign over the case "This is a Catholic Church Door Library. To take out a book, write your name on the card and leave it in place of the book. Within two weeks please return the book and put it in its proper place". When it becomes known that such a church door library exists, seekers for information about Catholic doctrines and principles will slip in and borrow a book, when they would never go to a Catholic Information Center or ask someone to lend them a book. As an example we would like to mention **St. Peter Parish Library**, located in lower Manhattan, N.Y., servicing mainly workers in the surrounding business area. Opened in Nov. 1943 with 400 books, the li-

brary now has 6,000 and rents about 10,000 annually.

This whole apostolate of encouraging our Catholics to read good books has become far easier of recent times because good and interesting Catholic books are much more numerous and are being published with much more skill. A whole lifetime would be too short to read the good Catholic books that come from the press year by year, even if all one's leisure time were given to it. Catholic history, Catholic doctrines, the lives of the saints, Catholic culture, these and many other subjects are to be found well and interestingly treated in the books of our Catholic publishers.

Usual Complaint

"But", some people say, "Catholic books are too dear." It is to be questioned whether they are relatively any dearer than the secular publications considering how limited is their sale. The difficulty is that Catholics expect to get them cheaper than they do the "best sellers". But even if they were a little dearer, there would be much more value to their purchase than in buying the possibly cheaper, but worthless and even poisonous stuff

that pours, in huge editions, from the secular press.

In fact, it is a wonder that the Catholic books are not deared. When a book is produced, the type setting costs a great deal of money. Once the type is set, corrected and the press made ready for printing, if a few copies only are printed each copy must bear its proportionate share in the large cost of setting the type and making ready. But if a large edition, say a hundred thousand, is run off the press, the cost of the expensive type setting, making ready, etc., is divided, so that each book has to bear only a small fraction. Hence, Catholic books, which are sold in such small numbers, are naturally dearer since each has to carry its due share of the high production costs, while non-Catholic, selling in editions of hundreds of thousands, reduce to a small fraction for each volume, the cost of setting up the type.

All in all, this subject will repay the careful consideration of every priest. Since the mind directs the will, and reading forms the mind, the pastor of souls will be conferring great favors and services on his congregation, and on the Catholic people in general, by promoting good Catholic reading.

... This is our first task: We must come to the people not primarily as priests, not primarily as Christians, nor even as brothers and friends: Our primary task is to live amongst them and win their acceptance as men. —Pere Loew.

The Priest - Standard and Ideal

ARTISAN of peace and minister of restlessness, apocalyptic wrestler and suffering servant, the priest is a riddle in society.

He is at once the "alike" and the "altogether-different," alternately a model for his brethren, **forma gregis ex animo**, and a "scandal," incomprehensible. In a mysterious way he disconcerts society but thereby he also is its salvation. If he is not the standard for human nature it is because he is very much more than that. His way of being an example and a "measure" among men consists in being "measureless" and in transcending human limitations. Therefore the priest is a unequalled value to human society; by obliging it not to be content with self-complacency but to seek elsewhere in a more lofty city its own reason for being and its redemption.

The priest's role is a strange one. He is of Heaven, without being in it. He belongs to human society precisely because he is not in it. Until the end of time his brothers will rise against him because of this inherent paradox; his title of citizenship will be challenged. To the very end however, that peerless "stranger" will be the salt counteracting the insipidity of the world, the force that will awaken it from its lethargy.

The first function of the priesthood in human society is to save it from becoming self-contained. Its first duty is to remain transcendent. Human society will only be saved by becoming superhuman. It will only realize the fullness of the City of Man by becoming the City of God.

—Emmanuel Cardinal Suhard

Working Where We Are

By a Parish Priest

FATHER James Keller's article, **THE OPPORTUNITY FOR THE AMERICAN PRIEST** in the March issue of **Pastoral Life**, sets forth admirably the principle that for world conquests the priest must enkindle the Apostolic fire in the hearts of large numbers on the home front. His article and the profoundly spiritual and mystical evaluation of the priesthood in the modern world by Emmanuel Cardinal Suhard are enough by themselves to give this particular issue a rating of outstanding merit. Sure-

The priest-author of the present article notifies us: "I have written a great deal, but I do not now like to be publicized as I have devoted myself wholeheartedly to being just another parish priest. But I think from my many associations with priests that they need this type of encouragement, and in a priest's magazine it will not seem anti-clerical."

ly thousands of priests often ponder the paradox of their world mission and the limitations of their charge. Acres of printed matter have set forth in the past few decades the necessity of universality in our priestly outlook and the deadly effects of a parochialism, which sets its own objectives and fails to see beyond. But in the manner of instilling a world outlook and in advocating means for it there are lacking in much of this literature both definiteness and clarity. Even more, there are distinctly secularistic trends which obliterate the first principles of priestly conduct and confuse universality with 'bigness' or national prominence.

This was made manifest to me through a number of years, when as Director of Catholic Action in a

diocese I was assigned to attend many conventions and congresses that had as their concern the promotion of Catholic thought and life by means of organizations and movements. A few years of it and I was as near to being discouraged as a priest can be. At every convention that assumed national significance one saw and heard the same enthusiasts and experts. There seemed to be such an indifference toward the need of securing humble results in humble places and so much ado about promotion and organization on a large scale that the impression prevailed with me, and I know others with whom I had contacts shared it with me, that the principals were much more concerned with making names for themselves and getting to be made bishops, than with the content and matter presumably their chief concern, Christian Doctrine, Charity and Social Action, Education, etc.

And there was a lot of episcopal oratory, which it did not take a psychiatrist to evaluate as the expression of impatience with the hard fact that the speaker could not claim jurisdiction over all of the United States, rather than only in this or that not too well-known diocese. I heard it described a number of times as 'the rat race for the purple' this going to conventions, saying something novel, pushing something new, riding the crest of movements. It seemed to work that

way too, for each year a few of those who had fluttered with activity and burned with intensity, came back with the quieter ponderosity of prelatical mystery to take their places with studied pomp among the moderators and episcopal chairmen.

But be that as it may, there is and has been for a long time a decline of emphasis on the 'home front'. That is why Father Keller's description of the humble and routine tasks of daily priestly life as our world 'opportunity' is so refreshing and a step towards clarification of how a priest becomes truly world conscious. He writes that the priest with the true world outlook is to be found "ministering to souls in our parishes, teaching in our seminaries, colleges and high-schools, and engaged in the official work of our dioceses. Without ever leaving the particular environment to which he is assigned, he can do much to step up the spread of Christianity over the world."

This is the encouragement that priests everywhere in America especially need today. We must in teaching and writing, in conference and retreats, in conversations and by example demonstrate that the priests in every so humble and restricted a charge can and must be a world Apostle. As such he is a world institution.

I RECEIVED my most convincing demonstration of this while

serving as a Navy chaplain on the restricted confines of a ship, the crew and company of which were preponderantly non-Catholic. For some twenty-seven months I was given what Father Keller calls my opportunity to be a world Apostle. I boarded it with a few words of advice from a veteran priest chaplain ringing in my years. "Remember that as a priest you are an institution and as a Navy chaplain you are an institution, not just a person," he had said when he gave me my assignment. Thousands of times the truth of it dawned upon me in the months that followed as I taught the A.B.C.'s to colored steward mates, argued in the ward room with the Harvard and Annapolis officer graduates, dealt with Protestant clergymen by the score, and in all the little nothings of a welfare and recreational officer performed by a priest. I got it from the lips of southern Protestant lads, deck hands, and from cultured and important admirals and captains that somehow in their esteem a priest is no mere man. I felt a power as real as it was mysterious, which my previous years as an instructor and serving in a chancery office somehow did not furnish me. I saw for the first time in my blind little way what world-reaching proportions and what perennial values the little ministeries can engender. I took new hope and all the dismal confusions I had acquired in congress-

REPRINTS And MANUSCRIPTS

Without deviating from the announced purpose and policy of PASTORAL LIFE or meaning to be apologetic, we feel that our readers will welcome suitable reprints appearing occasionally.

At the same time, we wish to remind you, one and all, that we wholeheartedly greet original contributions for publication in these pages.

We shall, however, continue to commission manuscripts on appropriately chosen subjects from qualified clerical writers.

ses and conventions fell into a silly place, no longer assuming the domination of obsessions, but as mere unimportant bad memories.

It was my grace to be assigned to a parish after the war. Here a vaster and more complex world than that of a ship's chaplain opened itself to me. I found that the week had not enough days and the years not enough weeks to attend to the thousands of intimate applications of the truths of our faith to the living of boys and girls, men and women. It would savor of boasting to recount how efficacious one's priestly word

and office can be. Journalists and novelists can never fathom it, and I often recall an old French Monsignor's saying that Zola once admitted that the life of a priest escapes all literary and artistic appraisal. Whether he actually said it or not I have never been able to ascertain, but I do know it is a fact.

At the word of a priest generations are born, at the word of a priest men and women can be changed—contrary to the evidence of human psychology, at the word of a priest fields become fertile, barriers break, the hungry are fed, the poor sheltered and the lonely solaced. There's no describing how these phenomena occur, the facts alone can be recorded and the means are visible only to the eyes of faith.

These things can be, if the priest carries in his heart a consciousness of his world mission, if he perceives selflessly how he can labor wherever he may be, that the opportunity is as great in a prairie town or village as in a metropolitan see.

WE NEED this consciousness again and we need habits of thinking that will offset the worldly notion of opportunity. Priests should not look upon humble charges as stepping stones to greater fields of activity. This usually means transfer from smaller and poorer communities to parishes in large cities. We need a lessening of the concept

of administration in favor of a concern for human and spiritual values. The truth of this is suggested in Cardinal Suhard's statement that 'his hidden work, his invisible efficacy escape perception' or in Pius XII's assertion that priests are to maintain "a personal, living relationship" with parishoners and not regard themselves as efficient administrators merely and bureaucrates. There is and has been too much of this, with the result that efficiency wanes and administration, when seen for its own sake, becomes empty and fruitless.

The priest's powers lies in the sacramental character given him in ordination. These powers can transfigure any personality and endow it with capabilities beyond estimation. We need not cite distant and exceptional heroes of sanctity. American Church history abounds with examples. It struck me with emphatic clarity in reading the recent life of Cardinal Gibbons, by Fr. John Tracy Ellis, which is in-

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cidentally good history and not mere eulogy.

WHERE there is a strong parish, there have been strong priests. Population trends, advantages of wealth and resources do not enter the picture. Some priests built up great and flourishing centers of Catholic life on almost desert plains, in shabby lumber towns and railroad centers, whereas, in great urban centers with population, culture, wealth and resources of every kind including often the bishop's special interest and concern, others never developed. History, proximate and remote, always reveals the true difference. It was a difference in the outlook and the personal zeal of the priests who were in charge. God laughs as he makes us realize this.

There must come again into our popular consciousness as a clergy the truth that distinction and renown are not qualities that bear fruit. Lowliness and self-effacement do. I am not referring to studied lowliness or sanctimonious humility.

That refreshing quality of joy in work, enthusiasm for the opportunities that are close at hand, interest in the people around us, with their weaknesses, virtues, vices and foibles are the human qualities on which the grace of ordination can build achievement. If every priest in America were suddenly imbued with this spiritual joy in his work,

the nation could be renovated in less than a generation, so great are the potentialities around us everywhere. But this joy does not manifest itself in ease or, picking daisies! It means patient and painful interest in the thousand and one concerns of rank and file people. It means promptness and sacrifice to be at their ready disposal. It means an eye for details, little things, little suggestions, little recognitions and little encouragements. It means humor, and this is not easy. It means a lot of hard thinking about apparently simple problems until a solution can be attempted. It means appreciating little growths, little offerings, little efforts, little triumphs. It has nothing whatever to do with adding machines, secretaries and ample office spaces. It transpires in the barber shop, on the street, in homes, in church, at the post office or depot.

We have to grasp again almost fanatically that the next phone call or door bell may mean that Christ's voice or Christ's eyes will meet us, not in a fairytale sense but in a rugged real sense in the person of a bothersome woman, a begging tramp, a nuisance salesman, a pesky child. If we can be kind to all of these we can know that we are beginning to be truly creative. We can rest assured that church spires will rise where we are, schools and institutions of charity with granite foundations

are not far off, vocations are in the budding, the seed is taking root.

Praying and preaching go with it all, but the formal praying is only the structure for the affective prayer that will rise from our hearts while we are helping the janitor to unclog a drain or arguing with the city fathers about closing the alley during play-time. The formal preaching is only a starter for the grasp of truth that someone may glean from us in a conversation after paying pew rent, or on a bed of pain at our sick call. There is a cementing process that goes on after church time, and we as priests have to be the patient trowel men.

The whole philosophy, if such we would call it, can be summed up in saying that the zealous priest is the priest who is 'on the job all the time and likes it.' He seems

always to be effortless, yet he must be always ready to make an effort. He learns his formal duties well in the seminary, but somehow, he cannot learn this the main business of his life except in the laboratory of life, his priestly assignment. Some learn it fast, some only after years, some never at all. But learn it we must if we are to save souls and be Apostles. Our influence may be confined 'incidentally' by our jurisdiction, but substantially it reaches beyond the farthest ends of the earth and beyond the farthest star. Like corn, it grows best at night when it is dark and we cannot see it. The dark days, when life seems particularly petty and empty, may be the days that truly produce. Only God and Church history can see the full results. We see at best the seed taking root.



ON TOURISM

In traveling and observing, the tourist learns to know better those whom, at a distance, he did not know or even ignored, and on his return he gives them a better name and a more favorable reputation in his neighborhood. As against that, he, on his part, has, perhaps unwittingly, caused his country, its civilization and the true religion to be judged and weighed—God grant that it may be always in good part. He is, as it has been aptly said, a moral ambassador, a lofty and noble mission indeed; but what a grave responsibility at the same time!

Pope Pius XII

Pastoral Reflections

By T. C. Siekmann

WILL IT SAVE SOULS?

A group of young priests were glowingly discussing some artistic aspects of the liturgical movement. An old priest sat there taking it all in. His only remark finally was, "Will it save souls?" Indeed that is the test of all our activities and interests. Certainly the liturgical movement is meant precisely to do that, to bring about more effectively the salvation and sanctification of souls, including my own. But if my interest in the liturgical movement or any other valid movement in the Church is mere dilettantism and a kind of personal gratification in what appeals to my esthetic sense, then I am pretty far afield, and I had better re-check my motives. Will it save souls, including my own, is the test. Likewise my preaching, my example, my encouragement of athletics and social affairs, my efforts all along the line, must be put to this test, "Will it save souls?" Saving souls is my work, and when something cannot be related to that aim it is out.

A BRUISED REED

A young man or young woman comes to me after an escapade of serious sins. He or she might well be described as a bruised reed. Our Lord fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, "A bruised reed he will not break." I too will not break this bruised reed. Mortal sin is a tragedy, the greatest possible. And today many of our young people with their solid courses in religion understand well the shattering consequences of mortal sin. A young man, say, of high spiritual ideals falls from grace. He knows he has done wrong. He is crushed in soul, beaten, bruised. In the plan of Divine Providence I of all the many priests in the world have been selected to be as Christ to this bruised reed. I could be harsh. I could snap, "Didn't you know better?" But I will be Christlike. "A bruised reed he will not break."

NEGATIVE MISTAKES

It is usually better to fail by omitting something than by making a positive faux pas. In a sermon what I leave unsaid hurts no one, but when I say something definitely imprudent it is impossible to repair the harm. The bawling-out that I neglect to give is possibly just as well left undelivered. But the unreasonable tirade that I launch into may do permanent harm. The kindly priest who in his endeavor to be really fatherly omits an occasional called-

for rebuke will do less harm by his omission of duty than the over-eager cleric who feels bound to denounce every real and imagined abuse. It has been repeated many times that it is better to fail on the side of kindness rather than on the side of severity. In doubt what to do, it is the part of prudence to fail negatively rather than run the risk of doing positive harm.

A SMOKING WICK

Our Lord is described in prophecy by Isaias as one who would not quench a smoking wick. Smoking flax or a smoking wick can certainly be an apt figure for the sinner, one who is down and almost completely out. The light of grace is extinguished, and the hope of repentance lingers on as a feeble spark. Our Lord would not trample out this feeble spark of hope. As His priest my attitude and actions should be as His. What exquisite care and infinite tact I should use in dealing with the sinner. It is my task to fan back to a brilliant flame this lingering spark of hope. I must be kind, understanding, patient, lest I cruelly and crudely trample out the smouldering wick. Even the sinner who spurns my efforts to help him must not be cast out with disdain. Someday, sometime, he will come back, but only if there is remaining in him the spark of hope for repentance. Whatever it may be that keeps a sinner from being reconciled, may it never be my fault, my lack of charity, my failure to be Christ-

like. "A smoking wick he will not quench."

GOOD SENSE

Whatever good qualities I may have as a man and as a priest will largely be nullified if I do not have at the same time good common sense. I constantly have to beware of being a stickler for the letter of the law when my insistence on theoretical right does harm to souls in practice. The Church understandably frowns upon mixed marriages, but when a Catholic girl introduces me to her non-Catholic fiance I will achieve little by embarrassing the girl and antagonizing the boy. My true charity and plain good sense at such a strategic moment will mellow him for conversion. My lack of tact will embitter him for life. The Church in discouraging mixed marriages has in mind the good of souls. If my ill-timed denunciation wrecks two lives, begets a lifetime of religious bickerings, and creates an impossible atmosphere in which the children of this union will have to grow up, then my zeal is misplaced and my charity has gone awry. One of the best ways to prevent a mixed marriage is to win the non-Catholic party to conversion, and kindness is the best approach. If conversion is not possible, a tactful handling of the situation can at least bring about a spirit of good will and co-operation that will eliminate much of the inherent difficulties of an unavoidable mixed marriage.



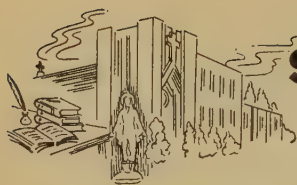
VATICAN COMMENTS

From OSSERVATORE ROMANO, Vatican City Daily

The dedication of Christ the King Seminary, annexed to St. Bonaventure's University, marked a singular historical event in the Catholic Church in the U.S. . . . This year the Greek Catholic Ukrainian Church completes 40 years of existence in the United States. It numbers 304 priests, 165 parishes, 22 chapels and 12 mission-posts. It is also represented by three religious Orders: the Basilian Fathers, the Franciscans of the Byzantine Rite and the Redemptorists, totalling 42 priests . . . Mons. Joseph Cardijn, founder of the Jocsists, stated in an interview that more priests should specialize in the apostolate among the workers. There is one motivating factor that insistently stands out in the history of the workingman's movement, namely, the unity of the working classes in asserting and defending their rights . . . In a catechetical work intended for the clergy, emphasis is placed upon opening up the vast panorama of personal and social life while teaching the beauty of revealed truths . . . Impetus has been given to the acclimation of Latin in the contemporary cultural environment by the appearance of the new periodical **Latinitas** . . . Shortage

of priests has always been a serious problem in Latin America. While the 135 million Catholics constitute 33% of the world Catholic population, its priests compose 6½% of the total number of clergy all over the world . . . A worthwhile experiment was conducted in Chile when seven newly assigned missionaries took special courses in the language, history and customs of the country for a period of three months before departing for their respective posts . . . A recent congress held in Colombia resolved to procure films for the 600 parochial halls through an organized system "Cooperative for Good Movies" . . . It may seem quite paradoxical that the eremitical life is experiencing a rebirth in modern times . . . An international conference for the defense of adolescent rights was held in Copenhagen . . . The importance of the parish as a social cell was one of the topics treated at a diocesan conference in the province of Quebec . . . A secretariate for cloistered monasteries has been integrated with the Sacred Congregation of Religious . . . "Capillary" missionary activity is a vastly important phase of Catholic Action.

T. J. V.



seminary Memoirs

INTER NOS

THE fact that the Newman Press has scheduled for September release an anthology of mine called **A Spiritual Reader** suggest to me that Inter Nos this time might profitably concern itself with the question of spiritual reading. I do not know why I should be speaking of spiritual reading as a question, because it might be rather more accurately termed an **answer**. An answer, that is, or at least a partial answer, to such questions one occasionally hears as "Why is my meditation so barren of accomplishment?" and "Why do I experience such difficulty in scouring up even the most banal of spiritual thoughts?"

Well, it is self-evident enough that to take something out one must first put something in, a consideration as valid in certain matters of the spirit as in the case of banks and ovens. Spiritual reading, in a word, is calculated to serve as fuel for meditation — if you've shoved no fuel onto the fire of daily meditation, you may expect it to burn accordingly low.

Spiritual reading, to be worthy

of the name, has got to be approached with the right motive. One must want to find God in the exercise and through it increase one's knowledge and love of Him. So the Priest who takes up his spiritual reading just for the sake of gathering material for a sermon, or the seminarian who devotes the time set aside for the exercise to boning up on his dogma, is making a mockery of spiritual reading (It would not be wrong, of course, to read with pencil and hand and note down worthwhile ideas and quotations—not at all. The point is simply that one must keep watch over one's primary motive.)

Another essential point is this. One's spiritual reading is not at all like the front page of the morning paper over which one's eye can skim in jig-time. No, you have to read **reflectively**, and that means without haste. And it matters not one single solitary bit how much one manages to read; what is important is **what** he reads. I imagine you could race through, say, the **Introduction to the Devout Life**, in a quite short time and so profit

from the reading in the most minimal fashion. You could, but what in the world would be the sense? On the contrary, I should not hesitate to say that if one finds in one single sentence enough fuel to keep him reflecting profitably for the balance of the time he has set aside for spiritual reading, he has done a splendid job of it. That, I suppose, won't happen very often, but if it does, why wonderful!

One will probably derive most benefit from reading slowly and deliberately, savoring phrases, weighing sentences. Naturally, common sense will have to come into play: "so to speak" is a phrase, but I very much doubt if you could "savor" it with any degree of success. Sentences which strike you with particular force, which have for you a special import, are worth going over more than once, and perhaps, even noting down. It is Saint Bernard's suggestion that you select a dominant thought from the passage you read, and recall it later on as a help towards recollection.

Regularity, too, is necessary with spiritual reading. It is better to read ten minutes a day every day of the week than a couple of hours at one sitting once a week. Spiritual reading assuredly deserves to be a **daily** exercise. And on no trivial account ought it to be omitted. The practice that obtain in some places of substituting for it a superior's conference or a radio

broadcast seems to me to be an unhappy one. One would hardly think of substituting a conference or broadcast for morning meditation, and yet spiritual reading is of almost as much importance as the meditation. Or who would consider dropping the particular examen in favor of the Sacred Heart program? No, "stick to it" should be one's rule when it comes to regular, daily spiritual reading.

(They tell us, by the way, that Saint Benedict — with a view, perhaps, toward encouraging stick-to-it-ness — was wont to depute two of his monks to go from cell to cell during the time assigned for spiritual reading, to check up on their confreres' fidelity to the exercise. The days of the giants . . .)

Father M. Eugene Boylan, so deservedly popular as a spiritual writer, and whose ideas, I must confess, I have largely followed in preparing these few paragraphs, has this to say in his **The Spiritual Life of the Priest** (Newman, 1949): "One reason so many fail at mental prayer is that they are trying to make a fire without fuel — they have given up regular spiritual reading. Apart from the Sacraments, such reading, in its own way, is the first essential of a priest's spiritual life."

But what should one read? Again, common sense must be invoked. It is not to be thought, for example, that everything that passes for religious literature is suitable

ble material for the exercise of spiritual reading. Ecclesiastical reading is not necessarily **Spiritual** reading. I remember hearing a religious tell me once that he had just finished reading the biography of a celebrated American prelate for spiritual reading. And something like **The Cardinal**, however intriguing a tale it may be, and however engagingly written, can hardly be considered adequate for spiritual reading. Neither, I should say, can the clerical reviews, and **a fortiori**, the diocesan newspaper, meet the requirements.

Unfortunately, it is not always easy to lay one's hands on suitable material, to find books that are at once solid and readable. There is so much "spiritual" writing that is clumsy and banal. Much also that is but sickly translation or pious frothing. Fortunately, though, there is now on the market much that is really worth-while, and want of suitable reading mat-

ter ought to be the last excuse we offer for not doing our spiritual reading. Many of the contemporary lives of the Saints, for example, are exceptionally fine, and would amply repay our reading them. I may also mention the anthology of modern spiritual writing which I have edited for the Newman Press, and which the reader might find useful.

In any event, Saint Philip Neri's advice that we read first and foremost the writing of those authors who wear "St." before their names is still very good. The Sacred Scriptures, of course, demand and deserve our first attention, and it goes without saying that there is something amiss if they play but scant part in our reading. But read we must, whatever the case, and, as they say, life is really too short to bother with anything but the very best.

Francis Edw. Nugent

THE VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM'S HATRED

RUSSIA: 40,000 members of the Clergy suppressed or imprisoned;
 UKRAINE: 5,000 priests suppressed;
 ROMANIA: 70 priests suppressed;
 BULGARIA: 120 priests suppressed;
 YUGOSLAVIA: 1956 priests suppressed or imprisoned;
 BALTIC STATES: 1,000 priests suppressed or imprisoned;
 CZECHOSLOVAKIA: 300 priests imprisoned;
 POLAND: 1,007 priests imprisoned;
 CHINA: 44 Bishops imprisoned and expelled.

BOOK-REVIEW *Selections*



TEACHING RELIGION FOR LIVING, by Sister M. Agnesine, S.S.N.D. Bruce Publishing Co., Milwaukee. 184 pp. \$3.00.

The chief purpose of this book is to waken in the religion teacher an awareness of his sublime calling: to teach the truths of our religion with so much warmth, sincerity, and conviction that pupils will **want** to accept and live these truths, and will be impelled to share them with others.

For this reason the reader of this book is frequently confronted with pertinent thought problems and questions, which he is asked to think through for himself and to discuss with others. There are no ready-made answers to these questions. Rather, they are designed to stimulate further thought and research, and thereby to impress deeply upon his consciousness the truths he is considering.

A further purpose is to review fundamental principles in methods of teaching, to apply them to the teaching of religion, and to illustrate their use.

Still another purpose is to view critically different techniques used in the teaching of religion in the past and, at present, to note limitations of these practices, and to draw practical conclusions for the

improvement of the teacher's own methods. With this thought in mind, numerous suggestions are offered for effective presentation of religion lessons, and for evaluating and carefully using the great variety of supplementary materials now available.

Since this book deals with current problems and methods of teaching religion, it is recommended as a basic text for a methods course in **seminaries, religious houses, and Catholic colleges.** The suggestions for study and demonstration will prove particularly valuable for young teachers who need firsthand experience in dealing with children and in using correct procedures and methods.

Experience teachers will appreciate the variety of work this book offers for discussion and demonstration purposes, for summer school refresher courses, for religion-teaching institutes, or for religion workshops within their own communities. To help those who wish to plan such an institute, a special program is offered in the Appendix, by way of suggestion. Similar programs have been found both absorbing and instructive for short, enjoyable vacation sessions.

The many teaching helps, the thought-provoking problems, and

the valuable supplementary materials offered in this book, have proved to be of special benefit for supervisors, principals, and others charged with the guidance of prospective teachers. For it is these leaders in particular who must inspire the teachers under their direction with a burning zeal for souls, and for teaching religion effectively.

Perhaps the greatest advantage of the present book is that it not only sets down principles and practices for making religion teaching effective, but also endeavors to carry out these principles in actual practice.

THE AMERICAN MARTYRS, By Rev. John A. O'Brien, Ph.D. Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York, N.Y., pp. 310, \$3.50.

The moving and dramatic story of the eight Jesuit martyrs, the first individuals on the American continent to be canonized as saints, is presented here for the first time in a single volume entitled **The American Martyrs**. The book represents years of research and embodies the latest findings of modern historical investigation in Canada and the United States.

The daring with which these missionaries from France plunged into the uncharted wilderness, lived and labored among the savage Indian tribes, and suffered torture and death, can scarcely be matched by any other enterprise in history. These pages are among the most thrilling, dramatic, and heroic in the annals of the discovery and

exploration of the American continent.

What makes **The American Martyrs** especially interesting is that the story is pieced together largely from the letters and diaries of the missionaries themselves. In spite of the weariness and hardship of travel and the trying conditions of life in smoke-filled wigwams the Jesuits were careful to record all they saw and heard of the life and customs of the primitive inhabitants of the New World.

Included is the account of Isaac Jogues, the first priest to enter what is now New York State, and of his two lay assistants, Rene Goupil and Jean Lalande. There is the story of Jean deBrebeuf, the giant among the missionaries and the first to accompany the Indians to Huronia and the last to leave. Especially stirring is the diary of Gabriel Lalemant who, though the smallest and most delicate of all, by an iron will and unwavering courage won the martyr's crown in six months. Daniel and Garnier were the next two missionaries to be martyred by the Iroquois while Chabanel, alone in the wilderness, was murdered by a treacherous Huron.

The volume enables the reader to glimpse the rude and primitive life and customs of the savage tribes as seen through the eyes of the first white men to penetrate in to their wigwams.

By providing priests and parishioners with a vivid account of these gallant and heroic missionaries, Father O'Brien's book will greatly

stimulate the growing devotion of the faithful to the American martyrs, the first saints on American soil to gain the crown of imperishable glory.

Written in popular and sprightly style with numerous excerpts from letters and diaries, **The American Martyrs** records one of the most brilliant, heroic and dramatic chapters in the history of North America.

The book merits a place in every Catholic home and especially on the desk of a priest to bring him its measure of encouragement, inspiration and help in his ministry of extending Christ's kingdom in the hearts of men.

MUST IT BE COMMUNISM?, by Augustine J. Osgniach, O.S.B. J. F. Wagner. 486 pp. \$4.00.

Although this noteworthy book appeared two years ago, we deem it of justifiable importance to refocus attention on its valued contents dealing with both the principles and application of the Church's social doctrine.

Recapitulating a salient portion of the flap blurb, a Christian solution of the social problem is well delineated in the unambiguous remarks of Cardinal Saliege: "Communism . . . is the evidence of our unfulfilled duty . . . It is time for us to return to the Gospel, to reread it and meditate on it, to imprint it in our hearts and spread it abroad. We shall not find in it the solution of every problem, but the spirit in which every problem

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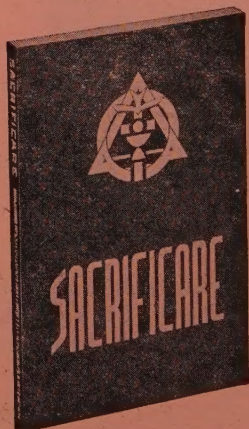
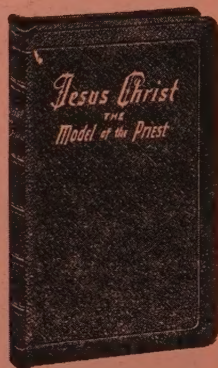
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